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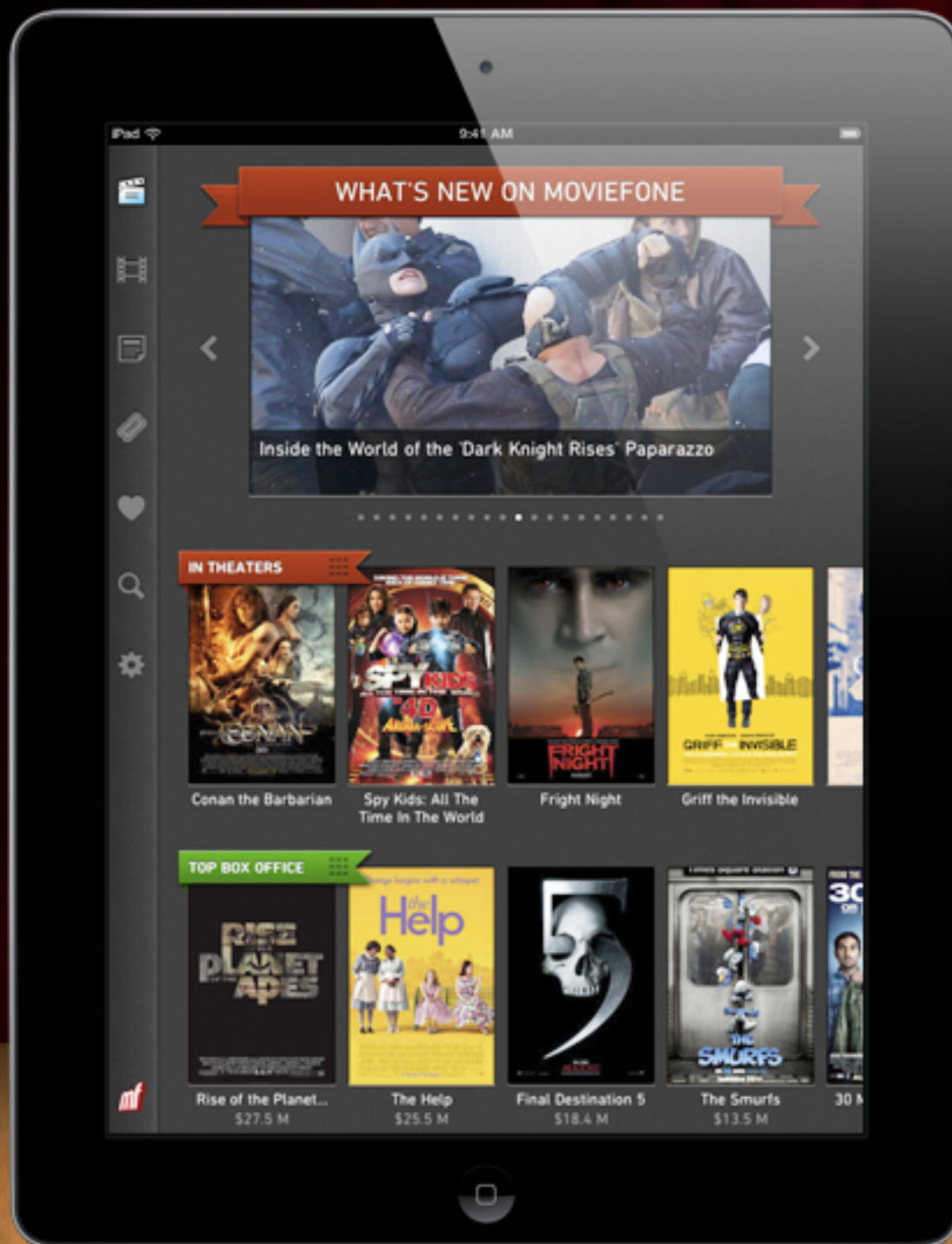
2011 Holiday
GIFT GUIDE

125 **MUST HAVE**
Gadgets

Tablets, *Smartphones*, Laptops, *Desktops*, e-Readers, *TVs*, Cameras, & *More...*

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It's the most wonderful shopping time of the year

editor's letter

Welcome to another special edition of Distro, a series of pages in which we'll make your holiday dreams come true. Okay, so it's not quite as good as winning one of those Toys 'R' Us contests that we somehow never got selected for when we were younger (a real shame, as we spent hours plotting our ideal trajectory through the aisles), but read on through and you'll at least know what things you should add to your wish list this year. And, of course, to your shopping list for Black Friday.


Sadly, Black Friday seems to have properly jumped the shark. I blame the failing economy — and the coupon-crazed eBayers who flipped their purchases instantly, keeping hard-working gadget lovers from getting any good deals. What was once a retail orgy of free-after-rebate, high-capacity memory cards and too-cheap-to-pass-up off-brand digital cameras has degraded into 20 percent coupons on towels and \$50 rebates on HDTVs priced so cheaply to begin with that you probably splurged long ago.

Cyber Monday is, of course, where it's at these days, and it



has a few distinct advantages — but there's one that stands out in our minds: you don't have to leave home to get the best deals. This means no 3AM wake-up calls, no hugging XL cups of Dunkin' Donuts to keep warm and no hours of small talk with the Canadians who flocked across the border to get in on

the deals after a holiday that, for them, already happened months before. As I write that, though, I can't help but think that people in other, warmer parts of the world probably have things a little easier.

Whatever gadget you're looking for this shopping season (within reason) we've got some advice for you. Naturally we've spent all year tinkering and toying with the best and worst and we'd like nothing better than to steer you toward the good and away from the bad. So, flip on through and see the best desktops, laptops, smartphones, cameras, docks, e-readers, tablets and more, all analyzed and categorized for your upcoming ho-ho-holiday shopping spree. But keep an eye on those prices, as they're likely to change. 

TIM STEVENS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF,
ENGADGET

Accessories

BY LYDIA LEAVITT



Gaming

BY SEAN BUCKLEY

Bags and Cases

BY JAMES TREW



Headphones

BY JOE POLLICINO

Digital Cameras

BY ZACH HONIG



Laptops

BY DANA WOLLMAN

Desktops

BY DANTE CESA



Printers

BY BILLY STEELE

Docks

BY JOESEPH VOLPE



Smartphones

BY BRAD MOLEN

E-Readers

BY BRIAN HEATER



Tablets

BY DANA WOLLMAN

Fun Stuff

BY DANIEL COOPER



TVs / Displays

BY RICHARD LAWLER



ACCESSORIES

As any technophile will tell you, accessories make the getup when it comes to complementing your favorite gadgets. Whether you're decking out a smartphone, computer, tablet, gaming system or just looking for some good old-fashioned holiday kicks, we're here to help you pick from our favorite accessories of 2011. Read on to find out which ones made the "Nice" list. — LYDIA LEAVITT

Stocking stuffers that aren't coal

Logitech Tablet Speaker for iPad

The holidays are all about festivity, which is why it's key to have some speakers on hand in case a roaring sing-along of *Deck the Halls* ensues. Enter the Logitech Tablet Speaker for iPad, a portable set of speakers that clips onto the slate, enabling the ultimate dance party in stereo sound. With an eight-hour rechargeable battery, the tunes will be flowing (much like the champagne) all the way into the new year and hopefully... *beyond*.

\$40

on Amazon

BUY NOW



EX3D glasses



For those who wouldn't be caught dead in standard-issue 3D glasses – even in the dark— there's EX3D's line of fashionable eyewear to be worn in pitch black. Perfect for date night at the movies or at home with your 3D TV, these babies will certainly help you stand out from the crowd – when the lights are on, at least.

\$35

on EX3D

BUY NOW

appBlaster AR gun

Ready to take *Alien Attack* for iOS to the next level? Toss your iPhone into the appBlaster. Once your iPhone or iPod Touch is secured in the AR shooter, all it takes is a touch of the capacitive pads or a pull of the trigger to cause serious space destruction.

\$27

on Amazon

BUY NOW



Aviiq Portable Charging Station

On days when you're forced to leave the comfort of your Snuggie and venture into the outside world, it's important to keep your gadgets juiced at all times, and the Aviiq Portable Charging Station should do the trick. The tablet-sized travel case features three USB power ports, capable of charging devices ranging from a smartphone to a music player or even an iPad from a single outlet, so you can rest assured you'll never be left powerless in public again — as long as an outlet is near.



\$80

on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...



Zotac DisplayPort

It may not look too glamorous, but when functionality is key, there's the Zotac DisplayPort, which turns any DisplayPort or Mini DisplayPort into a dual-HDMI hookup. With support for two 1920 x 1080 displays, you can watch *Rudolph* on two screens at the same time.

\$50

on NewEgg

BUY NOW

BookBook iPhone 4 case

For the Ron Burgundy types, who prefer to fill their living rooms with rich mahogany and many leather bound books, there's Twelve South's BookBook iPhone 4 case. Protecting your smartphone and doubling as a wallet, the vintage fixture gives the *illusion* that you're reading a book, even if you're really playing *Angry Birds*.

\$60

on Amazon

BUY NOW



Mo' money mo' problems



Burton Mix Master Gloves

There's nothing worse than exposing your digits to frosty temperatures while switching between jams on the slopes, which is why Burton's hooking you up with its Mix Master gloves. By embedding a wireless remote within, skiers or snowboarders can control their iOS devices wirelessly without being forced to face the elements. Although the price tag may seem a bit steep, Burton gloves do have a stellar reputation, and of course, life is always better with a playlist.

\$160

on SkiBum

BUY NOW

You might also like...



Hori PS3 Tactical Assault Commander 3

When you're just plain sick of all that holiday glitter, perhaps it's time to invest in something a little more hard, like the Hori PS3 Tactical Assault Commander 3 gaming keyboard and mouse. Designed specifically for the PS3, this combo will enhance your gaming chops with adjustable mouse sensitivity and a re-mappable keyboard that remembers your choice settings every time you sit down to play.

\$100 on Amazon

BUY NOW

Maxell Maxsound Soundbar Tabletop Speaker

The Maxwell Soundbar Tabletop Speaker not only looks cool as a cucumber, but also promises to amplify your favorite carols with a stereo kick thanks to a built-in woofer and two dynamic speakers. Strong enough to hold 55 lbs. of flat-panel TV goodness, the speakers will hold up to something as big as the old tube and as small as a smartphone, tablet or any other musical device.



\$94

on Amazon

BUY NOW

end.



BAGS & CASES

Santa may be able to toss a few thousand laptops in his bright red sack with nary a scratch to be seen — but you sure can't. You'll want to keep those goods sparkly and new for as long as possible, and that's what these gift selections are all about — getting your tech from A to B in the safest, most stylish way possible. There's plenty of choice for transporting your goodies, ranging from the bland to the bizarre, from rucksacks to courier bags, silicone to silk — there is literally something for everyone. Finding a one-size-fits-all solution is going to be nigh on impossible, but we're hopeful that what we've got here will be just the ticket to re-wrap what you just unboxed. — JAMES TREW

Rucksacks

Thule Crossover 25 liter

Years of making tough auto roof boxes means Thule knows a thing or two about shifting your valuables. When you're high-tailing it across town, be it to a meeting, school or just to a friend's flat, the Crossover Backpack is your guy. Built-in Macbook and smartphone pockets keep your vital gear safe, while the capacious main compartment and uncompromising quality make it a great all-rounder that should last for many more holidays to come.

Key specs:

25 liter capacity, crush-proof SafeZone, integrated laptop compartment.

\$99

on Amazon

BUY NOW



You might also like...



Kata KT D 3N1-30

An Engadget favorite for some time, if this bag doesn't have a compartment for it, you don't need it. Slide round and wear the Kata in its sling position for quick-fire grab-and-go access to your gadgets.

\$102 on Amazon

BUY NOW

OverBoard 25 liter backpack

If you're the adventurous type, or just like to feel like you are, this waterproof rucksack from OverBoard will at least keep your pressies dry while you enjoy the great — but wet — outdoors.

\$50

on Amazon

BUY NOW



Timbuk2 The Snoop

Part camera bag, part messenger, we love the versatility of The Snoop. We find the numerous compartments to be ideal for packing in your phone, PMP, batteries, cables or whatever else you might be hauling, without resulting in a chaotic mess just five steps into your journey. The tough nylon finish and padding where it matters make this light and comfortable, even on long treks across town. All this function doesn't come at the expense of form either, as in our opinion, The Snoop is as handsome as it is useful.

Key specs:

Available in different sizes and colors, camera bag storage with messenger bag looks.



from **\$109** on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...



Lowepro Sling bag

Sleigh bells ring, are you listening, with this bag, you'll be slinging... Small, tough and generally better than our carol singing, this nifty option from Lowepro somehow lets you cram a lot into not a lot of space. Slash pockets keep your around-town essentials close at hand.

\$56

on Amazon

BUY NOW

Rothco Battlefield Messenger

Sometimes a high-tech problem requires a low-tech solution, and we love the idea of this medic bag 'coming to the rescue'. The canvas finish adds a little analog flavor to your digital world, and that's not the only thing that's classic - at just \$18, so is the price.

\$18

on Amazon

BUY NOW



Gadget cases



Otterbox Reflex series

We've had our eye on Otterbox for sometime, and their Reflex range is doing it for us right now. When you've just peeled off the cellophane from a shiny new smartphone, you don't want it looking worn after a few thigh-rubbing trips in your pocket, do you? We find the Reflex range gives all the protection of a rugged case, without the need for a can-opener to get it out again. Just slide the bottom half off and your phone is dock-friendly again, clip it back on once you're done. Perhaps above all else, we've seen many gadget crises averted thanks to the toughness of an Otterbox, so it's no surprise that these are pretty high on our 'must-have' list.

Key specs:

Easy to install / uninstall, allows for easy docking, rugged style protection.

from

\$24

on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...

Nixon Horween Edition

Sometimes we like to enjoy the finer things in life, and this luxurious leather iPad satchel from Nixon feels as good as it looks. If Bond carried a tablet, he'd probably roll with it in this. Will you spy it under the tree this year?

from **\$90** on Nixon

BUY NOW



Verso Prologue for Kindle Fire

Nothing like a good book makes a Kindle look like a good book. Make sense? No? This smart case from Verso brings that leather-bound feel to an otherwise digital tome. Ron Burgundy would be proud.

\$40

on Amazon

BUY NOW



end.



DIGITAL CAMERAS

With cameras popping up on tablets, smartphones and even Bluetooth headsets, there's a fairly good chance that there's already a device in your pocket capable of shooting high-res stills and HD video. But even with popular apps like Instagram on-board, mobile devices still can't match the versatility and image quality of a dedicated snapper. If you're looking to hide a new point-and-shoot under the tree this year, there are plenty of great options to consider, for any budget. So clear off the memory card and get ready for our top picks that will deliver — and capture — plenty of holiday cheer. — ZACH HONIG

On the cheap

Panasonic Lumix DMC-FH25

A 16.1 megapixel sensor, 28mm wide-angle 8x zoom lens, optical image stabilization and 720p video to boot for just a couple hard egg nogs above \$100? Yeah, we'll take ten. With such a robust feature set and low price tag, it's no surprise that the DMC-FH25 is one of Panasonic's best-selling models so far this year — and it's sure to be a hit through the holiday season as well. It won't blow you away with record performance, but it's an excellent choice for anyone on a budget — and it comes in fun colors, too!

Key specs:

16.1 megapixel CCD sensor, 8x optical zoom, 720p / 24fps HD video.



\$119

on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...

Sony Cyber-shot DSC-WX9



Budget shoppers don't need to compromise much with the Sony WX9. This compact cam packs a 16.2 megapixel CMOS sensor, 5x wide-angle zoom lens, 10fps full-res burst capture and 1080i HD video. And if you're super-quick with the unboxings, you may even be able to snap Santa's post-drop escape in glorious 3D.

\$155 on Amazon

BUY NOW

Canon PowerShot ELPH 300 HS

When friends ask which point-and-shoot to buy, we typically recommend a Canon PowerShot, regardless of their budget. And you can't go wrong with this sub-\$200 snapper, which sports a 12 megapixel CMOS sensor, 1080p video and an impressive wide-angle 24mm 5x zoom lens with optical image stabilization.

\$178 on Amazon

BUY NOW



Canon PowerShot S100

The S100 is in good company — its predecessor, the S95, sat in this exact spot in our Back to School guide, but if you didn't pull the trigger on Canon's top-of-the-line point-and-shoot at that point, you're in for a treat. This year's compact has a nearly identical footprint, but boosts the optical zoom from 3.8x to 5x, while maintaining an f/2.0 maximum aperture, for excellent snaps in terrible light with a fair amount of creamy bokeh to boot. You'll also find a full range of advanced shooting features, including a manual mode and RAW capture, along with a new 12.1 megapixel CMOS sensor, 3-inch display and GPS functionality.

Key specs:

12.1 megapixel CMOS sensor, 5x optical zoom, f/2.0 lens, 1080p HD video.



\$430

on Amazon

BUY NOW



Samsung MV800

This clever hinged-screen cam has a 3-inch touchscreen that flips 180 degrees to face front, letting you take advantage of the full display for self-portraits and videos. Flipping it up halfway lets you frame shots from above, or turn the 16.1 megapixel camera upside-down for overhead shots.

\$229

on Amazon

BUY NOW

Fujifilm X10

The Fujifilm X100 was a hit with reviewers, but its \$1400 price tag and fixed lens made it impractical for those without deep pockets. Its new sibling, the X10, sports a 4x f/2-2.8 zoom lens and a cheaper price tag, but lacks the APS-C sensor of the older model. Still, its speedy lens and gorgeous rangefinder-like design make this hardy cam a win in our book.



\$600

on Amazon

BUY NOW

Interchangeable lens

Sony Alpha NEX-C3 with 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 lens

We're still just as smitten with Sony's entry-level mirrorless cam as we were during the review earlier this year, with the ILC earning a permanent spot in our trade show kit (and our hearts — no, *really*). It serves us quite well when shooting hands-ons, but is also our top pick for personal travel and casual shooting. It's not powerful enough to use as a primary cam for pros, but for everyone else, the NEX-C3 is worthy of your consideration, even if you've saved up enough for a more expensive (and heavier) DSLR kit. We really can't say enough good things about this camera.

Key specs:

16.2 megapixel CMOS sensor, 720p video, 3-inch articulating LCD



\$598

on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...



Nikon D7000 with 18-105mm f/3.5-5.6 lens

Its price has dropped just \$70 since the fall, but the 16.2 megapixel D7000 is still our top DSLR pick from Nikon. There's also 1080p video capture, 39-point autofocus, a wide-view 3-inch LCD, and a top ISO sensitivity of ISO 25,600.

\$1,499 on Amazon

BUY NOW

Canon EOS-1D X

It won't be available until next year, so you'll need to draw up an IOU if you want to gift Canon's EOS-1D X, but this 18 megapixel monster will likely be crowned king of the jungle come 2012. Canon's latest full-frame flagship will be worth the wait, if not the estimated \$6,800 price tag.

TBD



end.



DESKTOPS

Just because most folks have moved onto lighter and more portable playthings doesn't mean there aren't those of you that still enjoy some good old-fashioned "real computing" — you know, of the immovable persuasion. We jest, as despite their waning sales, desktops still serve an important role in the PC market, especially for those of you serious about all-out performance or a no-frills experience. And, while the pace of innovation in a once burgeoning category has slowed to a consolidated tranquil pace, there are still some hotspots of innovation — especially around all-in-ones and high-end gaming solutions. As you mavericks press on, so will we, so join us as we suggest some of our favorite desktops for your holiday perusal. — DANTE CESA

On the cheap

Dell Inspiron One

Though it may not be what we'd call powerful in its base incarnation, you can't fault Dell for the Inspiron 2320's clean looks and low starting price. Seven Benjamins nets you an all-in-one rocking a 23-inch display, replete with 4GB of RAM and a 500GB hard drive. Pricier configs wield touchscreens, HD webcams and scrap the budget Pentium for more brawny Core series processors. If you've got a penchant for speed, the \$1,399-range topper awaits with its Core i7 married to 8GB of RAM, NVIDIA's GeForce GT 525M and a Blu-ray burner, which should be able to handle what you'll hurtle its way. But before you pull out that plastic, do note: USB 3.0 is nowhere to be found, and — despite us wishing it wasn't so — all variant ship with Windows 7 Home, not Professional.

\$699

and up from Dell

BUY NOW



You might also like...



HP Pavilion S5

HP's Slimline S5 packs quite a potent punch despite its diminutive looks. This little number can be stuffed with up to 8GB of RAM, 2TB of storage and a quad-core Core i7. While it isn't made of svelte aluminum like its counterpart below, even the base config comes with a keyboard, mouse and optical drive — proving that miniature and cheap doesn't have to be barren.

\$329

and up from HP

BUY NOW

on the cheap



Mac Mini

The Mac Mini's still the cheapest way to get on the OS X train — and this year Thunderbolt's on-board. We're still smitten with its unibody design, which finally houses a processor from this decade. Yet, we find it egregious to demand users bring keyboards and mice to a computer that costs more than half a grand in 2011. And expect to shell out an additional \$79 for an external Superdrive.

\$594

on Amazon

BUY NOW

Samsung Series 7

While it might be down on graphical brawn, it's certainly not lacking originality. Marking the first time an all-in-one from Samsung has made it stateside, the 23-inch LED-powered beaut is unique in its ability to fold completely flat. Available in two SKUs, you're looking at either Core i3 or i5 internals coupled with 1TB of storage and Intel's integrated graphics. But unlike in many of its contemporaries, you'll find USB 3.0 support, although you'll only get one port. Oh and that panel? It's a touchscreen, so it won't be long before you're swiping on the custom touch layer, at radical oblique angles.



\$949 and up from Best Buy [BUY NOW](#)

You might also like...



Maingear Vybe

No-one said fast had to be svelte. While some of you might appreciate its utilitarian chic looks, we're after the Vybe Super Stock's vigor. Performance ranges from "good" (with the stock Core i5 and a GTX 450) to "awesome," with an overclocked 4GHz Core i7 and dual GeForce GTX 570s in SLI. Just promise you'll leave us some kills, okay?

\$949 and up from Maingear [BUY NOW](#)

Toshiba DX735

If you're looking for a little more "TV" from your all-in-one, the DX735 might be up your alley. The 23-inch touchscreen features multitouch and is powered by Intel's Core i5 or i7. Turn it around, and you'll find a lone USB 3.0 port and a neighboring HDMI input — allowing it to double as a miniature boob tube.

\$899

and up from Best Buy

BUY NOW



Money's no object

Apple iMac

While it's no longer the freshest desktop on the block, there's no denying it isn't the benchmark — at least when it comes to details like fit and finish. Like the rest of Cupertino's meticulously-crafted lineup, the iMac is carved out of a single piece of aluminum and then fused with über-reflective glass. You'll find roughly the same sorts of specs on the 21- or 27-inch variants, but those looking for a touchscreen, Blu-ray or USB 3.0 support ought to look elsewhere. But, hey, at least its got Thunderbolt, right?

\$1,120

and up from Amazon

BUY NOW

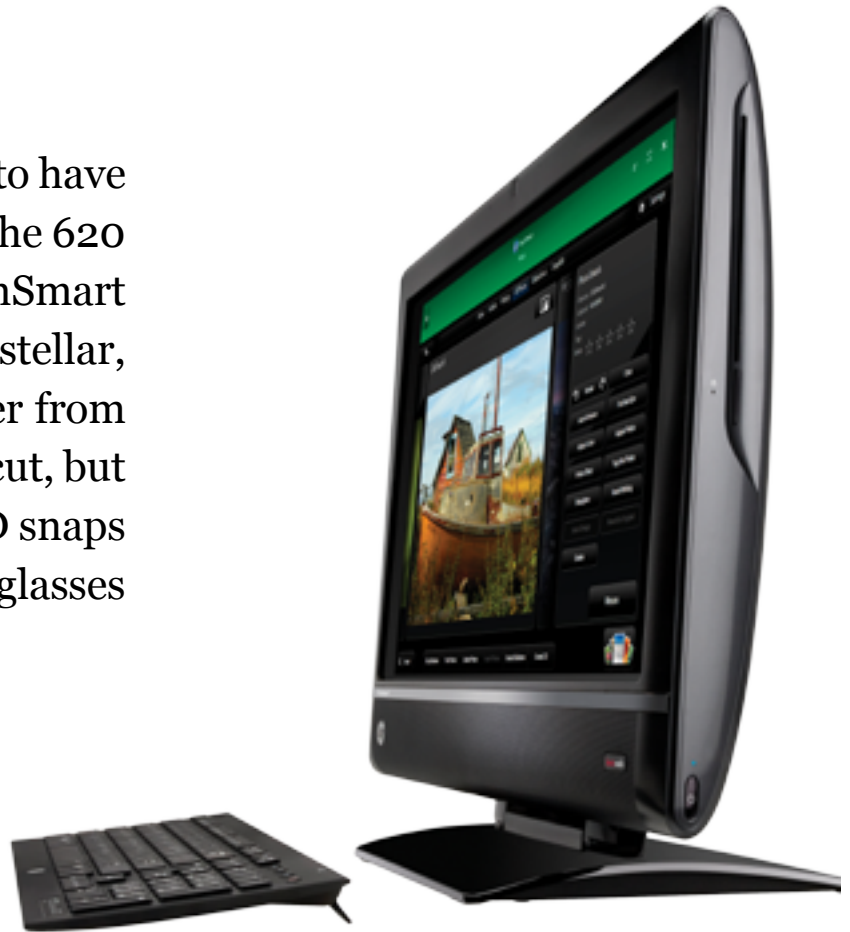


HP TouchSmart 620

If you've always wanted your all-in-one to have a little more 3D, the search ends here. The 620 is a rehash of its predecessor — the TouchSmart 610 — and that's a good thing, as the stellar, tiltable 23-inch 1080p panel carries over from its predecessor. HDMI didn't make the cut, but who'll notice that while you're taking 3D snaps of yourself wearing those active shutter glasses that come in the box.

\$1,600 from HP

BUY NOW



Digital Storm Ode Level 3

We know, we know. You can build something more powerful for less dough, but not everyone wants to roll their own. Boasting an overclocked 4.7GHz Core i7, dual NVIDIA GeForce 570GTX's in SLI, complete with 8GB of RAM, the Ode Level 3 means business. Still not sold? Well how about that trick white case? We think it's pretty rad.

\$2,339 on Digital Storm

BUY NOW

end.



DOCKS

'Tis the season to go shopping and slightly broke! Unless you're living off the grid, you can't escape the marketing merriment amping up the arrival of that most wonderful time of year. You know, the one where loved ones run themselves ragged skipping from store to store in an attempt to find that gift that screams, "I care." We know it can get hectic and the options overwhelming, but for the music aficionado on your list, you can't go wrong with a speaker dock. Lucky for you, we've whittled down the dizzying digital audio offerings into a handy guide fit for the frugal and lavish alike. — JOSEPH VOLPE

On the cheap

Yamaha PDX-11

Need to blast those beats as you strut in style through the streets? Yeah, Yamaha's got you covered with a speaker dock for iPods and iPhones that looks like a drum and bangs out thumping bass. This portable piece of octagonal audio comes ruggedized, so you won't have to worry *too* much when "band practice" gets out of hand. Oh, and it's got a 3.5mm jack that should play nicely with any other PMPs you happen to be packing.

Key specs:

Ruggedized, 4-inch woofer, 1 and 3/8-inch tweeter, battery-powered, remote control, weighs 4.8 pounds.

\$99

on Amazon

BUY NOW



You might also like...



CableJive dockBoss+

Jumped ship from the iPod bandwagon? Good thing then that CableJive whipped up this converter solution. Pairing a micro-USB and audio plug with a 30-pin adapter, this alt-dock lets you make the most of your one-time, Apple-only stereo.

from **\$22** on Amazon

BUY NOW

JBL On Stage Micro III

Interesting design at a sub-\$100 price point? JBL's nailed that one on the head with this AAA-powered, ultraportable speaker that'll eke out a full 24 hours worth of jams before calling it quits.

\$71 on Amazon

BUY NOW



Philips Fidelio AS851

Do Androids dream of high-fidelity sound? Why yes, they do, and Philips has seen fit to adapt its line of audio docks to accommodate the Googlefied handset powering your tunes. Whether you're a portrait or landscape fan, the micro-USB connector here will adapt to that orientation, syncing up your library of songs with the aid of trusty 'ol Bluetooth and a dedicated app.

Key specs:

FlexiDock for portrait or landscape orientation, USB port for charging, remote control, Bluetooth, weighs 7.2 pounds.

\$199

on Amazon

BUY NOW



JVC UX-VJ3

Need a home for that collection of iOS devices? JVC's created an all-in-one station that does the double duty of seating and streaming music from both your iPad *and* iPhone / iPod, if you're so inclined.

\$163

on Amazon

BUY NOW



Soundfreaq SFQ-1

This sleek and stylish Sound Stack for audio-philes streams your loss-less AAC tracks and even offers an old-school FM tuner, courtesy of a free Android / iOS remote app.

\$170 on Amazon
BUY NOW



Money's no object

Harman Kardon MS 150

There's no elegance to Harman Kardon's chunky bad boy, just pure audio power and an open invitation to the music source of your choice. The MS 150 packs a CD player, FM radio tuner and iPhone / iPod dock alongside a bevy of auxiliary input options, so you'll never be at a loss when it's time to pump up the impromptu dance party jams. Sure the \$599 price tag might sting a little, but that's why they call it the "gift of giving."

Key specs:

Dual 30W subwoofers, universal docking station, slot-loading CD player, FM radio tuner, Bluetooth, weighs 18 pounds.

\$599 on Amazon
BUY NOW



Sony RDP-X500iP

The company once synonymous with portable audio has opened up its sound dock gate to make way for a certain “magical” slate. Sony’s also jazzed this system up with magnetic fluid speakers and Clear Phase DSP wizardry — whatever that means.

\$269 on Amazon

BUY NOW



JBL On Air Wireless AirPlay

Because docks and wires are so yesterday, JBL’s AirPlay-enabled sonic stand offers an optional wireless connection that bridges to your Apple wares, freeing you to play DJ from any room in the house.

\$232 on Amazon

BUY NOW



end.

.....



E-READERS

The e-reader space is really — if you'll pardon the expression — heating up just in time for the holiday season. Industry leader Amazon dropped the gauntlet yet again, with the introduction of three new devices, including the entry-level fourth generation Kindle (which starts at an enticing \$79 for the ad-supported version) and the Kindle Fire, which is helping to further blur the lines between the e-reader and tablet worlds. Not to be outdone, Barnes & Noble, Kobo and Sony are also offering up impressive new devices for the holiday season. All in all, there's never been a more exciting time to give the gift of reading. — *BRIAN HEATER*

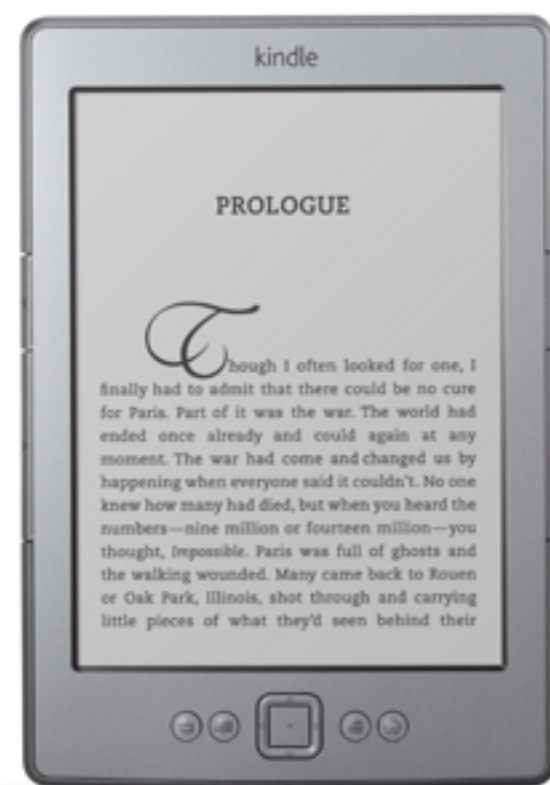
Stocking stuffer

Amazon Kindle (2011)

At \$79 for the ad-supported version, this is the device that will finally get plenty of holdouts to bite the e-reader bullet. It's also a great price for those looking for an affordable gadget gift. The fourth-generation Kindle carries on Amazon's tradition of delivering solid hardware, with a six-inch Pearl E Ink display, a zippy processor and a slim body — though there are certain sacrifices here, namely the lack of a touchscreen and keyboard. If you're in the market for either of those, Amazon has you covered with the Kindle Touch and the Kindle Keyboard (the re-branded third-generation model). For most, however, typing is secondary functionality on a reader and the physical page buttons on either side of the display will likely suffice. For those looking for a truly inexpensive option, however, the latest Kindle can't be beat.

Key specs:

Six-inch Pearl E Ink display, 2GB of storage, 800MHz.



\$79

on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...



Barnes & Noble Simple Touch

When it first hit the market earlier this year, Barnes & Noble's touchscreen reader quickly became one of our favorite devices, featuring a great form factor and some excellent social networking features. The company made the package even sweeter earlier this week, dropping the price by \$40 and rolling out a software upgrade that increased battery life, page turn rate and made the display a bit crisper. And, as Barnes & Noble put it, "best of all, no ads."

\$99

at Barnes & Noble

BUY NOW

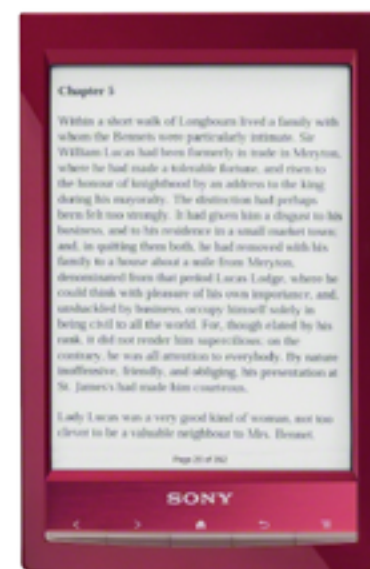
Mid-range

Sony Reader WiFi

Sony's been in the e-reader game for some time now, but has failed to make much of a splash against the likes of Amazon and Barnes & Noble — at least here in the States. The consumer electronics giant has a real winner on its hands this time out, however. The lightweight Reader WiFi packs in all manner of cool features, including pinch-to-zoom, built-in access to public library rentals and free Google Books content, touchscreen note-taking and multimedia features like music. Also, as the name suggests, this thing has WiFi built-in — unlike the previously lowest priced Sony reader. This is a full-featured dedicated e-reader — and then some.

Key specs:

Six-inch Pearl E Ink display, 2GB / expandable storage.



\$149

on Amazon

BUY NOW



Kobo eReader Touch

Kobo's touchscreen reader is a solid device — albeit one almost entirely lacking in bells and whistles. It offers up 2GB of built-in storage, microSD expandability, the company's competitive Reading Life and some decent PDF viewing options. At \$129, the reader is moderately priced — though it has since been undercut by the likes of Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

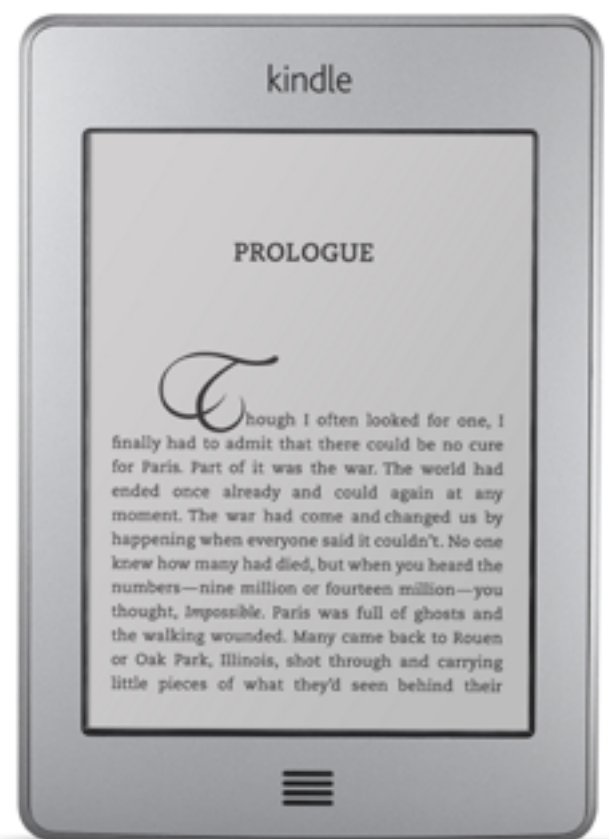
\$129

from Kobo

BUY NOW

Amazon Kindle Touch

Amazon shed the physical keyboard this time around, making for a reader that slips nicely into a pocket that also offers the page turn swipes that we've grown accustomed to on the Nook and Kobo. Also, unlike those readers, Amazon has equipped the Touch with a 3G option for downloading content on the go. Oh, and like the fourth generation Kindle, you can subsidize the cost a bit with ad-enabled options. Price: \$99 (ad-supported), \$139 WiFi; \$149 (ad-supported), \$189 3G at Amazon.



from **\$99** *on Amazon*

BUY NOW

Nook Tablet

On the outside, Barnes & Noble's latest entry sure looks an awful lot like the Nook Color. There are a few aesthetic differences here — it's a little bit lighter in the color and weight departments, shedding an ounce from its predecessor. The key differences are a souped-up IPS screen with reduced glare that can handle video up to 1080p, and some improved innards like a 1GHz dual-core processor. The latest Nook is all about multimedia, offering up apps like Hulu Plus, Netflix and Rhapsody, but the tablet hasn't fully abandoned its bookish roots, giving users a great full-color reading experience for magazines, comics and kids books. It'll cost you though — at \$249, this is easily the priciest selection on our list.

Key specs:

Seven-inch IPS display, 1GHz dual-core processor, 16GB built-in / expandable storage.



\$249 from Barnes & Noble

BUY NOW

You might also like...

Kindle Fire

Amazon's \$199 Kindle Fire may most appropriately be described as a tablet, with a slew of multimedia features, a multi-touch color display and downloadable apps. But given Amazon's background in books, you better believe that this Android-based device is an excellent reader, too. It's a bit on the pricey side for the e-reader world, sure, but as far as tablets go, it's a downright steal.



\$199 on Amazon

BUY NOW



Kobo Vox

Kobo joined the tablet bandwagon with this nicely priced Gingerbread tablet. The seven-inch slate offers up some reader-centric features like Reading Life and the Social Reading Pulse, plus access to some 15,000 Android apps for those times when you're on the search for another distraction.

\$199

from Kobo

BUY NOW

end.



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FUN STUFF

For some, it's easy to forget about having fun — fretting over buying the “right” tablet, e-reader or DSLR can strip the joy of unbridled silliness that Christmas allows you. This is your handy guide to stuff you can kick back and enjoy some crazy fun with. There are no ecosystem wars here, no desire to have the loudest or fastest plug-in gadget; just things you'd prefer to give and receive instead of a Sharper Image motorized tie rack... or back-hair shaver. So join us, if you will, for a look at this year's collection of fun stuff! — DANIEL COOPER

On the cheap

Blade Runner Umbrella

The post-Christmas slump normally begins with jeans that no longer fit, and dreary, wet winters. But what if the latter wasn't such a bad thing? With this light-up umbrella right out of *Blade Runner*, you too can pretend you're living in Los Angeles circa 2019. Suddenly dealing with drizzle doesn't seem so bad as you wait to be hassled about the off-world colonies. The future-brolly comes in a choice of blue or white, powered with just three button batteries. Now only if we knew which direction the next Nexus VI attack was coming from.

\$25

at *ThinkGeek*

BUY NOW



You might also like...

Kymera Magic Wand

Halfway through a *Harry Potter* marathon, you need to pause the action. Whip out your Kymera, say “*televisio siste!*” and with a swish and flick of your wrist, make everyone think you’ve got powers. The secret’s in the wand, a motion-sensing remote control that learns up to 13 gestures and plays nicely with nearly all home audio equipment. If you live in a *Twilight*-loving household, tell them it’s a wooden stake with Laurent’s name on it — they won’t know the difference.

\$65 on Amazon

BUY NOW

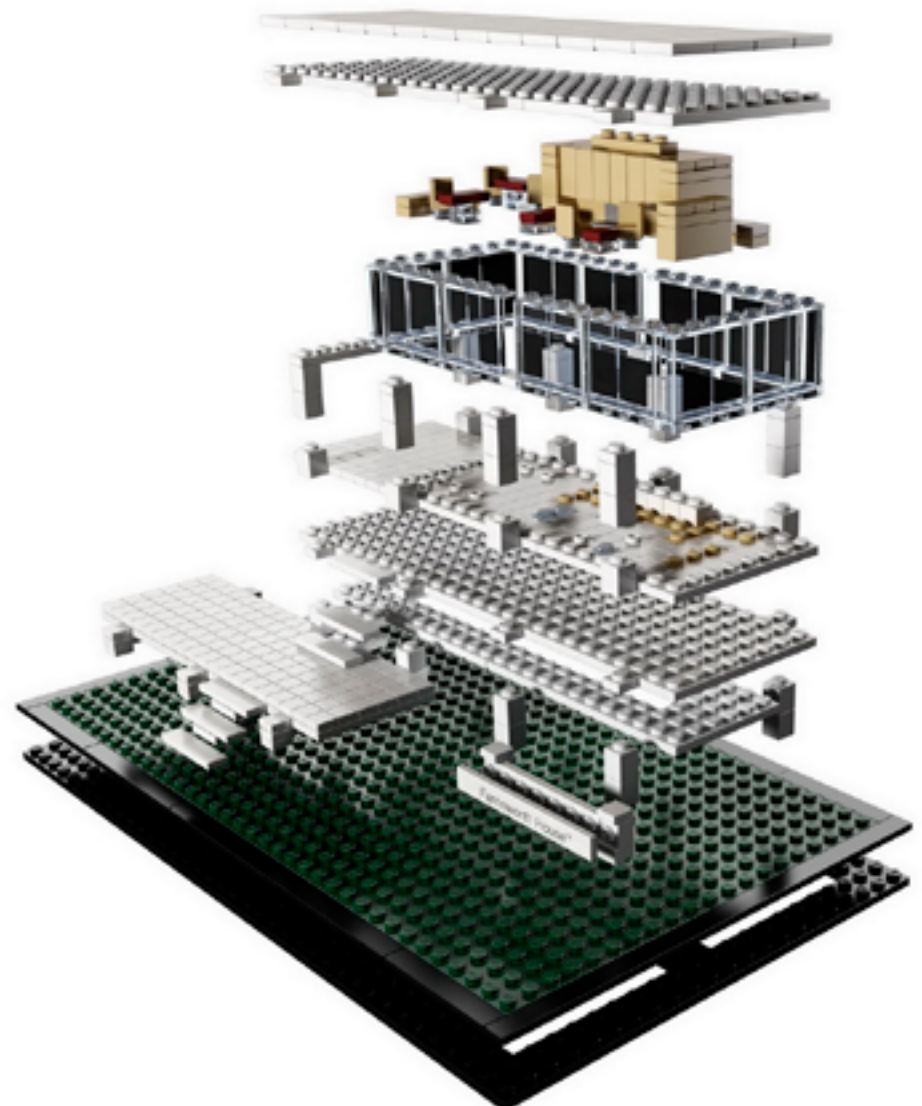


Lego Architecture: The Farnsworth House

You can still be geeky without a smartphone in your hand — while the rest of ‘em settle down to watch *A Christmas Story*, you can get stuck in some Lego. The architecture series recreates landmarks in Denmark’s famous brickwork. You can grab the White House, Space Needle or Sears Tower, but for our money, it has to be Mies van der Rohe’s pioneering space-age Farnsworth House from 1951. If cynical relatives sneer at the thought of you playing with Lego, remember: it’s educational.

\$60 on Amazon

BUY NOW





\$130

on Adafruit

BUY NOW

Adafruit iCufflinks

Showing one's geek credentials in a lounge suit or stroller usually entails sporting a ridiculous necktie down to your chest: anathema to the *Put This On* enthusiasts that we are. That's why we're in love with this classy and tasteful pair of glowing IEC 5009 (okay, power button) logos that don't scream for attention as they hold your double-cuffs in line.

You might also like...



Nike SportWatch GPS

To some, exercise is fun — it's the only rational explanation for joggers. Why not add a gadget to the most... natural of activities with a GPS watch? The wrist companion tracks your speed and route, letting you share it with like-minded workout buddies online. Oh, and if you're buying it for someone else, a tip: be very careful the recipient doesn't take it as an inference they're getting a bit hefty.

\$200

on Amazon

BUY NOW

Saga build-your-own Banjo Kit

The festive jigsaw puzzle often makes you hanker for something that challenges your engineering and craftsmanship skills rather than being able to match bits of sky together. That's why this build-your-own Banjo Kit is the gift that keeps on giving. Once you've fiddled, pulled and tweaked the parts into place, the end-product is a fully working musical instrument you can annoy parents and children with all the way through to January 1st.

\$349 on *Maker Shed*

BUY NOW



Money's no object

Grace One City e-motorbike

Imagine the look on your face if you unwrapped this on Christmas Day — the fun you'd have speeding past sweaty, lycra-clad commuters as you enjoy your electrically assisted journey. Our biggest gripe with the Grace One is its high price, but we couldn't deny the bike's prowess as a luxury fun machine.



\$6,000 from Grace (import)

BUY NOW

You might also like...

Sony HMZ-T1

Most TV rooms can't hold a 150-inch screen, which is why it's amazing you can experience owning one by strapping one of these to your head. Two HD OLED displays project movies, television and games with simulated 5.1-surround while you rock that Geordie LaForge headgear.

\$800 from Sony

BUY NOW



MakerBot Thing-O-Matic 3D Printer

What do you buy the nerd who has everything? The power to make anything. With the magic of open-source 3D printing, you can produce anything your imagination can conceive (so long as it'll fit on the plate). Soon after setup, you'll be producing jewelry, prototyping inventions and never buying birthday gifts ever again.

\$1,300 from MakerBot

BUY NOW

end.

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GAMING

Ah, the holiday season. That special time of year when we give our loved ones the new hotness of the video game world, and then promptly exploit their over-excited reactions to propel them into unwanted YouTube fame. Even if your familial relations don't have the stuff to become this generation's "N64 kid," you can still kick a few rad toys their way just for the love of it. And if you're having trouble finding the perfect gift for the gamer in your life, we're here to help. — SEAN BUCKLEY

On the cheap

Nintendo Wii bundle

The upcoming fall release of *The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword* is pushing the Nintendo Wii back to the front of gamer consciousness, and the waggle-riffic wonder has never been cheaper. Watch your step though; despite a uniform \$150 sticker price, not all bundles are equal — some of Nintendo's newest sets cut out Gamecube support. Backwards compatibility might not matter to your little Hylian hero, but we can't think of a good reason *not* to have it. Make sure to read console packaging carefully — if the pictured unit is lying on its side, you're probably looking at a Gamecube-free Wii. Consider your gameplay needs carefully before proceeding.

\$150

+ on Amazon

BUY NOW





Nintendo DS Lite

We don't care if its two screens only peer through two dimensions, the DS Lite is still one of the best little handhelds money can buy. Of course, being the best-selling portable console in history carries quite a bit of clout, but being followed by an army of fully functional fakes? That's a badge of honor. Nintendo's twin-screen toy may have been discontinued at dedicated game shops, but it can still be found at big box stores — and for cheap, too.

from **\$99** at Target

BUY NOW

Skylanders: Spyro's Adventure Starter Pack

Not many games come with a gadgety twist, but Spyro's latest venture into the breach simply wouldn't be possible without this RFID "Portal of Power." *Skylanders* combines the concept of collectable figurines with downloadable content, giving you more in-game content for each figure you buy. Give the completionist gamer on your list something new to obsess over.

\$70 on Amazon

BUY NOW



Sony PlayStation 3

If you can only afford one home console this year, the PlayStation 3 isn't a bad choice. Sure, it lacks the edge of Xbox Live's multiplayer community, but it more than makes up for it with fantastic exclusives, native Blu-ray support and a welcome lack of mandatory fees. Want to play the odd online game or watch a film on Netflix? Go ahead, PlayStation Plus is optional — basic services work just fine without it. The PS3 is a solid console, a solid Blu-ray player and a pretty solid gift... as long as your giftee isn't a die-hard soldier in the never-ending console wars.

\$250

and up on Amazon

BUY NOW



You might also like...

Nintendo 3DS

From high hopes, to low sales, to even lower prices — it's been a rough year for Nintendo's latest handheld. The bright side? The stereoscopic star has never been more ripe for the picking. With games like *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D*, *Mario Kart 7*, and *Super Mario 3D Land* on deck for the holidays, the Nintendo 3DS finally has a solid library to stand on.

\$170

on Amazon

BUY NOW





Xbox 360 Console

If you're deadly serious about competitive console gaming, Microsoft's Xbox Live is the network you're looking for. With a killer online network, a stellar back-catalog of AAA titles and an ever-addicting achievement system, it's hard to go wrong when gifting a gamer an Xbox. The rig comes in an assortment of affordable flavors, from the 4GB base model, all the way up to 320GB limited edition Kinect bundles.



\$199

and up on Amazon

BUY NOW

Money's no object

PS Vita First Edition Bundle

The PlayStation Vita's 2012 release makes it a *little* difficult to wrap up and stick under a tree, but like all good things in life, there's a loophole. Give the gift of early gaming *late*, with Sony's PlayStation Vita First Edition Bundle. This set ships a week ahead of the handheld's official release date, replete with a copy of *Little Deviants*, a limited edition case, a 4GB PS Vita Memory Card and a PlayStation Vita rocking both 3G and WiFi connectivity. Your giftee still won't be able to get their hands on it until February 15th, 2012, but think of it as giving them a bonus gift: patience.



\$350

on Amazon

BUY NOW



Android Gaming Tablet

Still on the fence about getting your gamer relative a tablet in lieu of an Xbox? If you're leaning slate-side but still want to tack on some gaming flair, check out GameStop's selection of gaming tablets. The outfit is offering an array of Honeycomb slabs pre-loaded with seven free games. An extra \$40 snags you a dedicated gaming controller, just in case you wanted to hold on to that tactile feeling.

\$350 and up at GameStop

BUY NOW

PlayStation 3D Display

If you're going to get a TV for the game room, you may as well go all out. Sony's 24-inch *PlayStation 3D display* not only offers all the benefits of a regular 3D TV, but is also the exclusive bearer of Sony's SimulView technology. It even comes with a copy of *MotoStorm: Apocalypse*, so you can try out its fancy dual-full screen magic as soon as you open the box.

\$500 on Amazon

BUY NOW



end.



HEAD PHONES



We imagine many a PMP or smartphone will be changing hands this holiday season — iPhone 4S or Galaxy Nexus, anyone? And what better way to accessorize your brand new mobile gadget than with a set of headphones? Fret not audio lovers — we've rounded up nine of our top picks that we think you'll really enjoy while on the move. We're talking headphones that'll let you control your playlists and chat with friends, all without exposing those precious new gizmos to the harsh winter elements.

— JOE POLLICINO

For starters

Sony NWZ-W260 Walkman in-ears

PMP? Who needs one? Not anyone rocking this set of in-ears from Sony. These Walkman-branded 'buds come with a choice of two or four gigs of storage for your tunes, leaving behind any worries about pocket space. Better yet, the water-resistant design should hold up to a fair amount of sweat, appeasing fitness buffs and marathon runners alike — you'll have eight hours between charges to put that durability to the test.

Key specs:

2 or 4GB of built-in storage, water-resistant, eight-hour battery.

\$60-80 on Amazon

BUY NOW



You might also like...



Klipsch S4i / A

You've probably heard of Klipsch's S4 in-ear headphone line. Whether you're an Android faithful or an iOS junkie, these 'buds will keep your mobile life in control with an in-line remote / mic and great sound to boot — all without breaking the bank.

\$100

on Amazon

BUY NOW

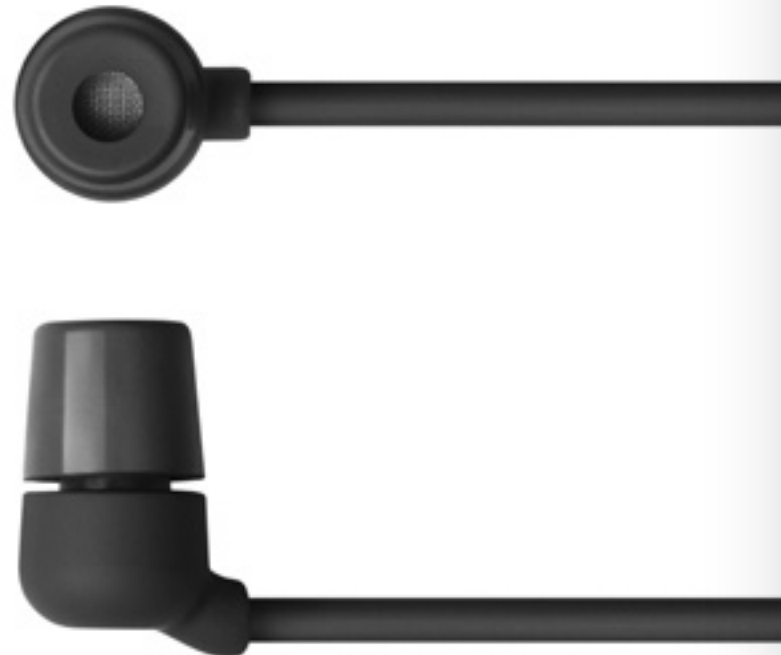
AiAiAi Swirl w / mic

Keep it simple, keep it stylin'. If that's your mantra, then AiAiAi's Swirls are sure to rock your holiday this year. With a plethora of color options, a right-angle connector and a three-button remote / mic, you'll have all your mobile bases covered.

\$80

on Amazon

BUY NOW



Bowers & Wilkins C5

This may only be the company's second set of headphones to date, but given the pleasing performance we experienced with them, it's obvious that B&W has swiftly attained a knack for this mobile audio thing. This micro-sized kit packs a number of perks, including Tungsten Balanced earbuds with Secure Loops for an excellent fit, and a Micro Porous Filter for wide soundstaging. The set's aluminum build not only looks classy, but will also hold up in your day-to-day rigors. Lastly, iPhone users will no doubt appreciate the inline mic's tactile controls while skipping through songs on the move.

Key specs:

Tungsten Balanced aluminum earbuds, Secure Loop fit, iOS-compatible remote / mic, Micro Porous Filter, hardshell carrying pouch



\$180 on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...



Klipsch Image One

Want that S4i-type vibe, but hate jamming silicon in your ears? Klipsch's Image One offers its signature sound in an on-ear package — and there's a similar iOS-compatible remote / mic here as well.

\$150 on Amazon

BUY NOW

Nokia BH-905i

Bluetooth isn't just for dinky ear-pieces, you know. This headset looks like a normal set of cans, but features A2DP Bluetooth functionally, on-ear controls and eight microphones for noise-cancelling. There's a duo of mics for phone calls and a rechargeable battery too.

\$183

on Amazon

BUY NOW



Money's no object

Sony MDR-NC200D noise cancelling headphones

When it comes to city life, finding some peace and quiet can be tough. Of course, anyone with noise-cancelling headphones knows such silence can be blissfully simulated, and we found that Sony's MDR-NC200Ds admirably fit the bill. This portable on-ear set can hush harsh sounds for up to 22 hours on a single AAA-battery, all while automatically analyzing your surroundings to achieve optimal noise-blockage. Best of all, you may even forget you're wearing them thanks to the extra comfortable padding and lightweight design.

Key specs:

Intelligent noise-cancellation, foldable design, talk-through mode, detachable cable, included carrying case.

\$200

on Amazon

BUY NOW



You might also like...

Westone 4 R-series

Looking for massive sound in a small package? This IEM set can pack a serious punch thanks to its quad-driver array, all the while being small enough to fit in your pocket. Swap out the detachable cord with an optional EPIC MICS “smartphone interface cable,” and you’ve got a mobile headset fit for an audiophile.

\$500

on Westone

BUY NOW



Bowers & Wilkins P5

We can't say it enough — the P5s remain one of our favorite iOS-compatible, noise-isolating headphones. With a comfortable on-ear fit thanks to soft leather earpads, you'll be able to rock on the go for hours, and take the occasional phone call while you're at it.

\$300

on Amazon

BUY NOW

end.



LAPTOPS

Let's get this out of the way: a laptop is an intimate gift. Even if you were to get away with paying just \$400, it's a lot to spend on even your spouse (ten years is the netbook anniversary, right?). Not to mention, your lucky giftee will be spending more time with it, perhaps, than they do their friends, families and pets. At the same time, the selection is nothing if not overwhelming, and if you were to make a spreadsheet tallying prices and specs, you'd notice an uncomfortable similarity across different brands. So, we rounded up some of the best we've seen — everything from all-purpose notebooks to Ultrabooks to high-end dream machines. If you're thinking of pulling the trigger, hop past the break for a few ideas and the (very brief) low-down on the trade-offs you'll be making.

— DANA WOLLMAN

On the cheap

HP Pavilion dm1

The dm1 has long been one of our favorite ultraportables, and it remains relevant even today thanks to a smart redesign that gives people the choice between an AMD E-series APU and a Core i3 processor. With this generation, you'll enjoy Beats Audio, a flush battery that doesn't jut out of the back, a flush trackpad, a soft, non-reflective lid and a re-tooled chassis that makes it look like one of HP's higher-end Pavilions, cut down to size. As for that Core i3 model, it starts at \$600, but for the money at least you get an external optical drive thrown in, gratis.

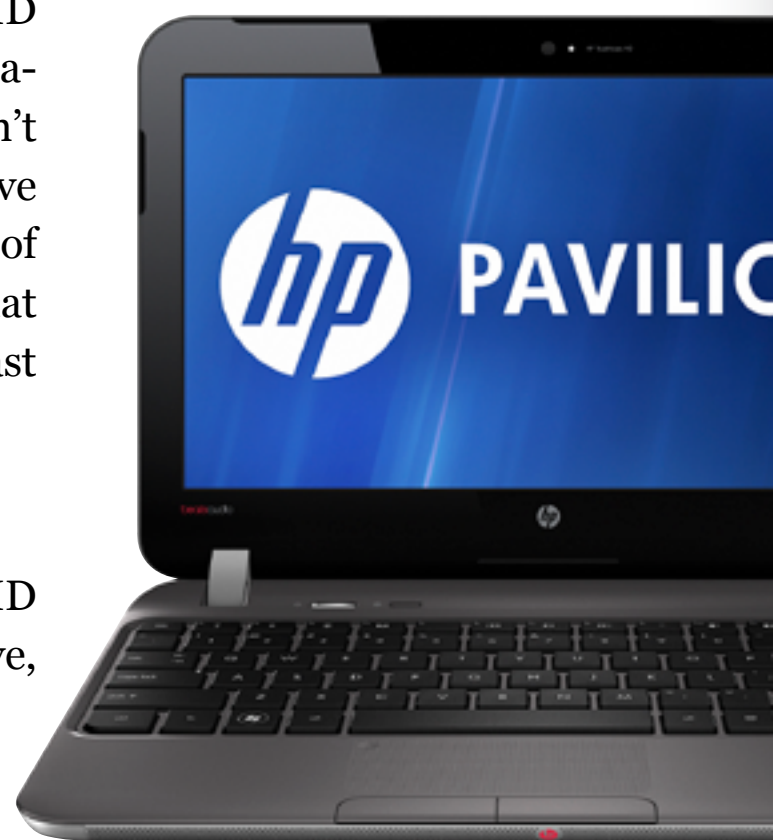
Key specs:

11.6-inch (1366 x 768) display, 1.65GHz dual-core AMD E-450 APU, 4GB of RAM, 320GB 7,200RPM hard drive, rated for 9 hours of battery life, weighs 3.52 pounds.

\$465

on Amazon

BUY NOW



You might also like...



Dell Inspiron 14z

At the moment, the 14z happens to be one of our top picks for students and families, thanks to its clean, mostly metal design, comfortable keyboard, fast performance and insanely long battery life (what other \$600 machine lasts nearly seven hours unplugged?). Just make sure you uninstall all that bloatware before you get too comfy.

from **\$650** on Amazon

BUY NOW

Sony VAIO SB Series

The SB's price keeps dropping, but even when it cost more we declared it one of our favorite laptops with a built-in optical drive, because of its impressively lightweight design, long battery life, matte display and switchable graphics. The trade-offs: the trackpad isn't the smoothest, and the fan is loud.

\$700

and up on Sony

BUY NOW



HP Folio 13

In retrospect, it's obvious that while we sat around wondering when HP would unveil its first Ultrabook, the company was biding its time, watching the market *very* closely. At \$900, the Folio undercuts most everything else out there while cramming in more features — namely, a 128GB SSD and backlit keyboard. And though it's plumper than the others, at 3.3 pounds, its extra girth means it has room to accommodate more ports, including HDMI, Ethernet and USB 2.0 and 3.0. And at that price, it's also more polished than the identically priced Acer Aspire S3 Ultrabook, with its brushed metal lid and keyboard deck.

Key specs:

13.3-inch (1366 x 768 display), starts with a Core i5 CPU and 128GB SSD, rated for 9.5 hours of battery life, weighs 3.3 pounds.

\$900 and up



You might also like...

ASUS Zenbook UX31

Though it wasn't the first Ultrabook, it was the first to give the MacBook Air a run for its money. The UX31 is striking with screaming performance, long battery life and a high-res display. Our biggest caveat is that its touchpad remains flaky, even after an update. Anyone who buys this needs to have faith that ASUS will tweak the trackpad until it gets it right.

from **\$1,100** on Amazon

BUY NOW



Lenovo IdeaPad U300s

Okay, it's missing an SD slot and backlit keyboard, and its display is fairly low-res, but hear us out: the U300s is one of the best Ultrabooks you can buy. We love its tasteful, rock-solid aluminum design, sub-20-second boot time and — most of all — the comfortable keyboard and glass trackpad.

\$1,050 on Amazon

BUY NOW



Money's no object

Apple MacBook Air (13-inch)

The MacBook Air's met its match in the form of featherweight upstarts such as the Zenbook UX31 and IdeaPad U300s, and it's been bested outright as far as port selection and screen resolution go. But for now, the Air remains one of our favorite laptops because it succeeds where so many other Ultrabooks have struggled: to this day, its bouncy keys and smooth, reliable trackpad remain unrivaled. The 13-inch Air's user experience makes it worth the extra Benjamins, even if other models offer similar specs for less money.

Key specs:

13.3-inch (1440 x 900) display, starts with a Core i5 CPU, 4GB of RAM and a 128GB SSD, rated for 7 hours of battery life, weighs 2.96 pounds.

\$1,235 and up on Amazon

BUY NOW



You might also like...



Sony VAIO Z Series

It's a good sign when one of our few complaints about a gadget is how pricey it is. The Z is impossibly light and makes fine use of dual SSDs. This time around, it trades switchable graphics for an external dock housing a discrete GPU and an optical drive. We're impressed with its brisk performance and high-res display, but be prepared for some serious fan noise.

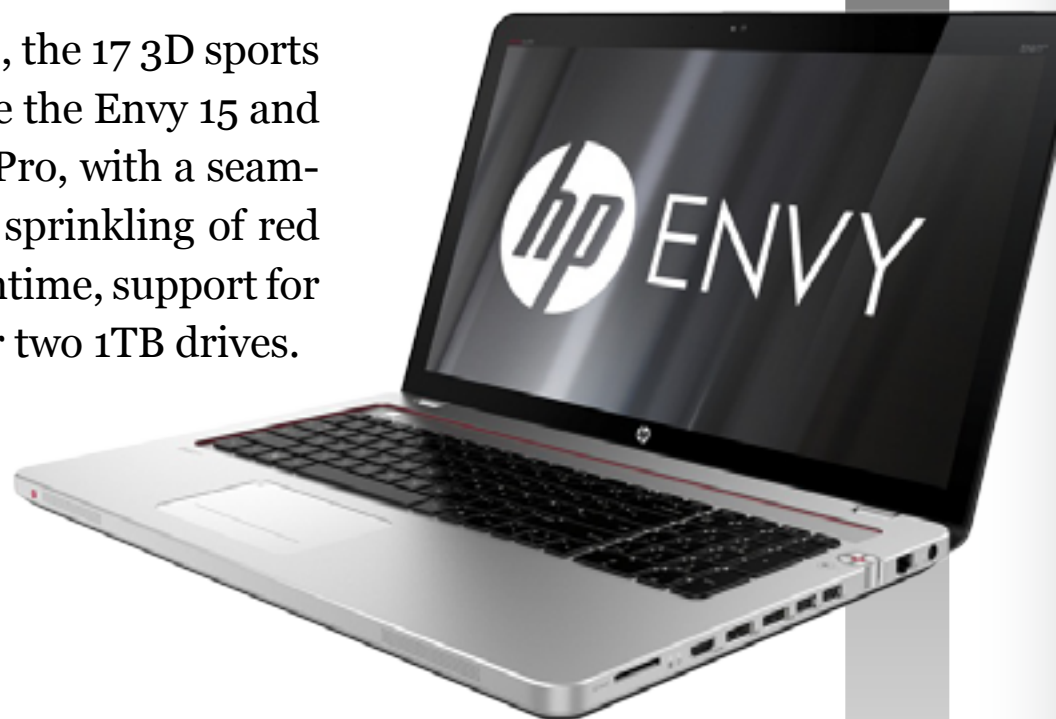
from **\$1,857** on Amazon

BUY NOW

HP Envy 17 3D

Sitting at the top of HP's redesigned Envy series, the 17 3D sports a 1080p, display powered by ATI's 3D tech. Like the Envy 15 and Envy 17, its design is half Beats, half MacBook Pro, with a seamless aluminum chassis, backlit keyboard and a sprinkling of red accents. The 17 promises up to eight hours of runtime, support for three monitors and up to either a 128GB SSD or two 1TB drives.

from **\$1,600** available December 7th



end.



PRINTERS

Yeah, yeah... we know — paper is so 20th century. But truth be told, there are still a lot of us that have use for the old-fashioned printed page. Whether you're a student who needs to output seven copies of that term paper, or an aspiring photog looking to cut down on professional printing costs, we have some thoughts on what to look for this holiday season. Perhaps you're ready to take those homemade Christmas cards to the next level? Print them yourself! Who doesn't love an early present? Read on to see just what caught our eye this year.

— *BILLY STEELE*

Inkjet

Canon PIXMA iP4920

If you're looking for a solid, well-rounded inkjet printer, this may be your best bet. The iP4920 handles both text and photos well and its prints will even outlive *you*, lasting up to 300 years thanks to Canon's ChromaLife100+ technology.

Key specs:

5-color ink system with laser-quality text output, borderless 4x6 photos in 20 seconds, turns HD clips into high quality prints, print directly on CDs, DVDs or Blu-ray Discs.

\$77.47

on Amazon

BUY NOW



You might also like...

Epson WorkForce 40



Nothing too flashy here, but the WiFi and Ethernet connectivity are nice additions. You'll also get laser-quality text and excellent photo output with images that are dry to the touch immediately after printing.

\$99 from Epson

BUY NOW

HP Officejet 7000

Looking to go a little larger with your prints? You won't find a much cheaper 13x19 printer than this wide-format machine. You'll be able to share this bad boy via Ethernet with up to five other users as well.

\$135 on Amazon

BUY NOW



Brother HL-2280DW

Color? We don't need no stinkin' color. Sometimes you only need plain old black and white to get your point across, and this machine can do just that, on a budget. It also boasts wireless networking and automatic duplex printing — so you can print on both sides of the trees you sacrifice for that Tolstoy literary analysis.

Key specs:

27ppm, wireless / Ethernet connectivity, 250 sheet capacity tray, automatic duplexing for two-sided printing.

**\$138**

on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...



Brother HL-4150CDN

If you're needing a color laser printer, you're going to pay dearly for it. And with that being a given, you might as well go all out with this selection. Networking, color printing and duplex capabilities may soften the blow, *a little*.

\$300

on Amazon

BUY NOW

HP LaserJet Pro M1217nfw

Sure, it's technically an all-in-one, but for a few extra dollars you can grab copy, scan and fax options. Wireless networking makes this a nice option for your home office, especially if color just isn't your bag.



\$197 on Amazon

BUY NOW

All-in-one

Epson Artisan 730

If it's a jack-of-all-trades you're looking for, this may very well be it. You'll get copy, print, scan and photo capabilities all in the same box. Not only that, but you'll be able to plug those microSD and CF cards directly into the printer for easy access via a built-in touchscreen panel.



Key specs:

4-in-1 functionality, WiFi, 2.5-inch LCD touch panel, 4x6 photos in 10 seconds, printing from mobile devices, CD / DVD printing without labels, Claria Hi-Definition dye inks.

\$125 on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...

HP Photosmart 6510



A 3.5-inch touchscreen lets you make sure everything looks great before you start cranking out that print job, letting you avoid that absurdly pricey ink. Memory card slots and iOS compatibility allow quick printing should the need arise.

\$120 on Amazon

BUY NOW

Epson Artisan 837

Still have to send those pesky faxes and have a little extra coin to throw down on a printer? This beast does it all and features a 3.5-inch LCD on its 7.8-inch touch panel. WiFi is still good to go, as are memory cards slots and an automatic document feeder.



\$229 on Amazon

BUY NOW

end.



SMART PHONES

JACK FROST NIPPING AT YOUR PHONE AND YOU NEED A NEW ONE? WE KNOW IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO DECIDE ON A SMARTPHONE TO ADD TO YOUR HOLIDAY WISH LIST, BUT IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE HITTING UP ALL OF THE NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTIES, YOU DON'T WANT TO BE USING SOMETHING THAT'S TOO EMBARRASSING TO TAKE OUT OF YOUR POCKET. THIS SEASON OFFERS A LOT OF TEMPTING OPTIONS: ICE CREAM SANDWICH, WINDOWS PHONE MANGO AND IPHONE 4S ARE ALL WORTH DRINKING A LOT OF EGGNOG OVER. UNFORTUNATELY, THERE ARE SO MANY TANTALIZING POSSIBILITIES THAT WE AREN'T ABLE TO INCLUDE EVERY SINGLE HANDSET, BUT WE'VE WHITTLED IT DOWN TO A MERE NINE DEVICES THAT WE THINK EVEN OLD MAN WINTER WOULD ENJOY. JOIN US TO HELP RING IN THE HOLIDAY CHEER. — *BRAD MOLEN*

Prepaid / budget

HTC WILDFIRE S

We wonder if the “S” stands for stocking stuffer. HTC’s following in the successful footsteps of LG’s Optimus One lineup, bringing the handset to multiple prepaid and postpaid carriers. Is this going to be the fastest device you’ve ever used? With its 600MHz processor, we doubt it — it’s not a game-changer by any stretch, but the Wildfire S is still a reliable device that will satisfy anyone looking to get their first smartphone, and it’s a great choice that’ll give you a lot of bang for your tiny buck.

Key specs:

600MHz CPU, 3.2-inch HVGA display, 512MB RAM, 5MP camera with LED flash, Android 2.3.



\$

varies by carrier

You might also like...



Samsung Conquer 4G

A smartphone with a 1GHz CPU and WiMAX for a mere copper cent? Yes, please. The Conquer earned our praise, packing a blizzard of functionality into a post-paid device that won't cost you a heckuva lot.

\$.01

(with contract)
on Amazon

BUY NOW

LG Optimus Slider

If you're going to be wearing gloves a lot this season, pulling them off to type on a capacitive touchscreen may result in a little frostbite. The LG Optimus Slider may let you keep those mitts on, with some nice features to boot.

\$200

on Virgin Mobile

BUY NOW





Samsung Epic 4G Touch

Remember when Samsung's Galaxy S II graced the top of our Back to School guide? It's still on top, but — much like the temperature — its price has cooled down substantially, now that it's available on three of the four national players as a subsidized option. While all three come with our highest recommendation, the Epic 4G Touch is available for a truly mid-range price that provides a tannenbaum packed with righteous goodies underneath.

Key specs:

1.2GHz dual-core Exynos CPU, 8MP rear / 2MP front cameras and 1080p video capture, 4.5-inch Super AMOLED Plus display.

\$100

on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...

Motorola Atrix 2

On the second day of Christmas, your true love may be getting you the sequel to Motorola's game-changing Webtop phone. The Atrix 2 comes with similar features but has a fresh design, better camera and the same performance for a lower price.

\$50

on Amazon

BUY NOW



HTC Radar 4G

Android is by far the dominant force on the list, but Windows Phone refuses to be ignored. Its latest update, Mango, is featured on HTC's new offering for T-Mobile, the HTC Radar 4G, and is a great option if you're still looking to find a heartfelt gift.

\$100

on T-Mobile

BUY NOW



Money's no object



Samsung Galaxy Nexus

If there's one handset that won't be getting shipped back on Boxing Day, it's the drool-inducing Samsung Galaxy Nexus. Gaining notoriety as the first device running Android 4.0 (aka Ice Cream Sandwich), it has a gorgeous HD display and plenty of other top-notch specs. And don't underestimate the power of that Roboto font.

Key specs:

1.2GHz dual-core Exynos CPU, 1GB RAM, 4.65-inch HD Super AMOLED display, 5MP rear / 1.3MP front cameras with 1080p HD video capture.

TBD

You might also like...

HTC Vivid

The Vivid is one of the first LTE smartphones on AT&T's true 4G network, affording you super-fast virtual sleigh rides. Its sack of goodies is packed with a 1.2GHz dual-core CPU, 4.5-inch qHD display, 8MP rear cam and 1080p HD.

\$160

on Amazon

BUY NOW



end.



Apple iPhone 4S

Now offering a 1GHz dual-core CPU with an 8MP rear camera, 1080p HD and best-in-class Siri voice recognition, the iPhone 4S still gets high marks — even if some of its thunder was stolen by the Galaxy Nexus.

\$199-399

On AT&T

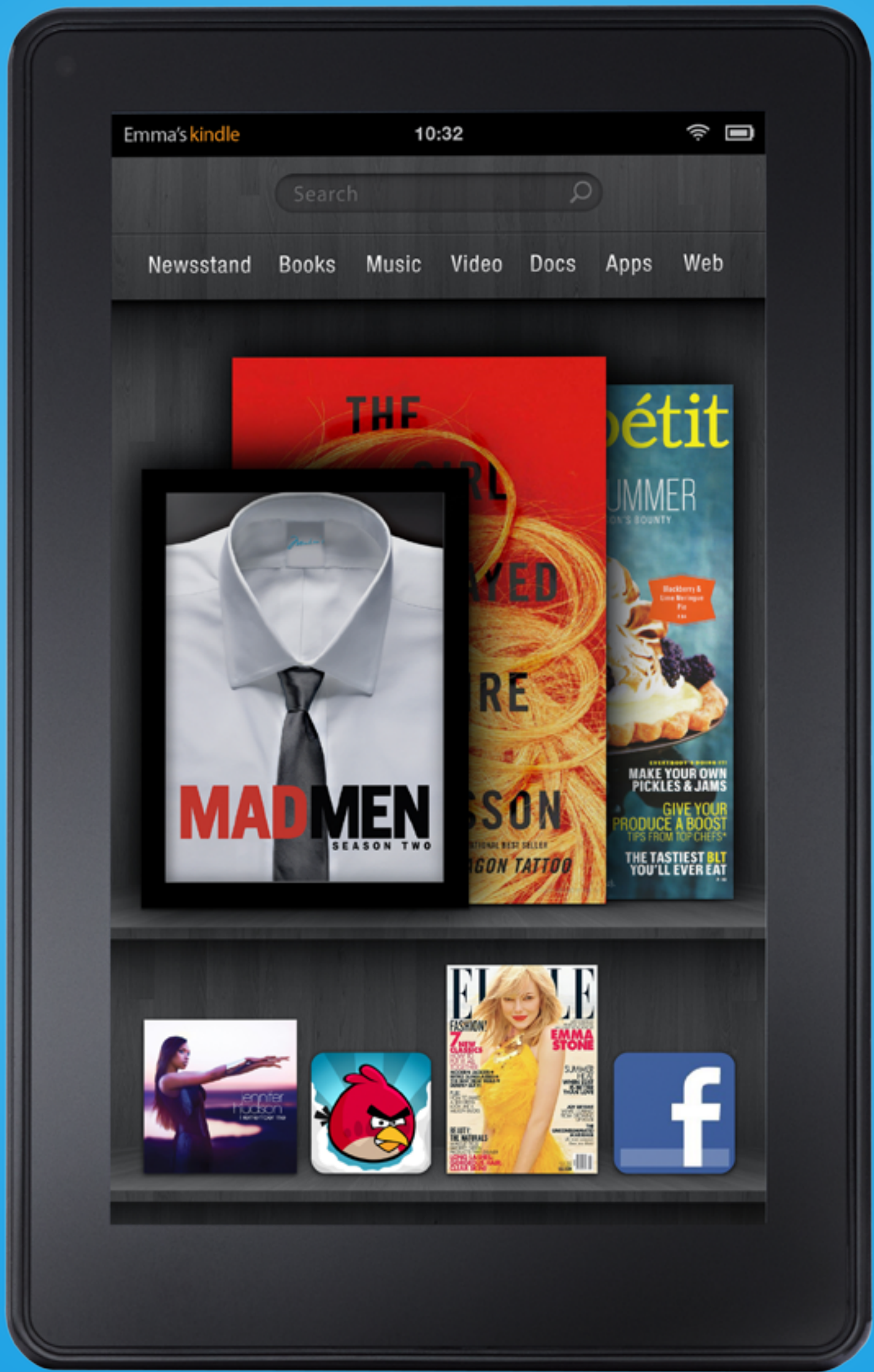
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On Sprint

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On Verizon

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TABLETS

Of all the electronic gifts you could buy someone right now, a tablet seems like one of the safer bets. It's a cheaper way of saying "I love you" than bestowing a \$1,000 laptop, and it takes less chutzpah than signing someone up for a smartphone (along with two years of data fees). And let's be real here: what's more festive than flopping onto the couch in pajamas after opening gifts and lazily playing *Angry Birds* while *It's A Wonderful Life* airs in the background? Yeah, we can't think of anything either. Sadly, we don't have any webOS-flavored tablets this time around, and we couldn't include some hotly anticipated numbers like the Transformer Prime, since they're not shipping yet and we don't even know how much they'll cost. Still, we managed to find a slew of Android tablets (and one iPad) across a range of budgets. Been on the fence about what to get? Skip past the break for some ideas. — *DANA WOLLMAN*

On the cheap

Amazon Kindle Fire

Hear that? That was the sound of other Android tablet makers taking a big gulp. Though it undercuts its competitors by at least \$100, the Fire still manages to offer a high-quality IPS display and a (heavily skinned) version of Android that covers the basics — email, web surfing, watching movies. What's more, it's closely tied to Amazon's vast empire of books, movies and MP3s, giving it a tighter ecosystem than what most other Android tabs have to offer. Sure, it lacks a camera and anything that qualifies as beefy storage, but with a price that tempting, its value is undeniable.

Key Specs

7-inch (1024 x 600) IPS display, 1GHz dual-core CPU, 512MB of RAM, 8GB internal storage, rated for eight hours of continuous reading, weighs 14.6 ounces.



\$199

on Amazon

BUY NOW



Acer Iconia Tab A100

Like other 7-inch tablets, the A100 runs Android 3.2 and is far more affordable than most 10-inchers. We think you'll dig its fast performance, absence of annoying skins and its portable design. Be warned, though, that it has short battery life, even for a tablet this small.

\$328

on Amazon

BUY NOW

HTC Flyer

We're losing hope it'll ever run Honeycomb, but the Flyer is nonetheless a steal thanks to a steep price drop. After all, how many other Android tabs with pen support can you find for \$300? For the money, it also has a solid, well-made aluminum design, though regrettably, the pen isn't included in the US.

\$300

from Best Buy

BUY NOW



Archos 80 G9

Though it's not the thinnest or lightest tab, the 80 G9 offers the best bang for your buck. For \$370 at the high end, it offers a 250GB hard drive, kickstand, full-sized USB port, healthy battery life and support for a raft of codecs. And if you could do without the HDD, you can step down to one with 8GB or 16GB of flash memory (\$300 and \$320, respectively). Either way, you get Android 3.2 while some similarly priced bargain-basement tabs run rusty old Froyo.



Key Specs

8-inch (1024 x 768) display, 8GB or 16GB of flash memory or a 250GB hard drive / microSD slot, USB port, 1 to 1.3 pounds, 1GHz or 1.2GHz dual-core CPU, rated for up to 10 hours of battery life.

\$280

and up on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...

Samsung Galaxy Tab 7.0 Plus

The original 7-inch Galaxy Tab finally has a successor in the Plus, which sports a 1024 x 600 display, dual-core 1.2GHz CPU and 16GB or 32GB of internal storage. Like other 7-inchers, it runs Android 3.2, though Samsung skinned it up with TouchWiz UX.

\$400

on Amazon

BUY NOW



BlackBerry PlayBook

Back when the PlayBook cost \$500, it was a tough sell: the OS was buggy and it still lacks a native email app. But after a stream of updates, the addition of Android app support and a steep price drop, this 7-inch tablet has suddenly become a lot more intriguing. Now let's just hope that email app is indeed coming soon.

\$265

and up on Amazon

BUY NOW



Money's no object

Apple iPad 2

It's all about the apps, folks. While the Galaxy Tab 10.1 rivals the razor-thin iPad 2 in terms of build quality, Apple has maintained a wide lead in app selection. With 140,000 to choose from, the iPad 2 has become a veritable Swiss Army Knife, and even if you think Android's catalog is vast enough, many developers still write for iOS before they ever turn their attention to Honeycomb. Until Google's ecosystem can match Apple's, this remains the tablet to beat.

Key Specs

9.7-inch (1024 x 768) IPS display, 1.3 pounds, 16GB to 64GB of internal memory, 1GHz dual-core A5 SoC, rated for up to 10 hours of battery life.

\$499

and up from Apple

BUY NOW



Samsung Galaxy Tab 10.1



Truth be told, we have a few favorite Android tabs, but if it's speed and a pinch-thin design you are after, the Galaxy Tab 10.1 is the one you want. We are enamored with the Tab's solid build quality and vibrant 1280 x 800 display, and if you like TouchWiz on Samsung's phones, you'll feel right at home using the 10.1: it runs the similar TouchWiz UX atop Android 3.1.

\$500

on Amazon

BUY NOW

Sony Tablet S

Just another Honeycomb tab? Not exactly. The 9.4-inch S stands apart from garden-variety slates with an ergonomic shape meant to mimic a folded magazine. It also packs a raft of unique features, including a universal remote and access to Sony's vast music and movie catalogs. It also runs select PlayStation games and streams media through DLNA-enabled speakers and TVs, to boot.

\$500

on Amazon

BUY NOW



end.



HD TV & HOME THEATER

For a crowd-pleasing holiday gift, it's hard to do better than a TV (or something that plays on or plugs into a TV), so naturally we're here to help you out once again. Of course, this is an ever-changing industry segment, but we've got you covered — regardless of whether you need a flat panel or a projector. If you're out shopping for someone that has (or wants to) cut the cable, or someone that has every channel, there's something for you. Of course, we'd also recommend keeping a close eye on the tablet and gaming categories too, but companies like Roku, Samsung and Ceton are making sure you have all kinds of options dedicated purely to video. Give them a look after the break. — *RICHARD LAWLER*

On the cheap

Tron: Legacy Blu-ray

Whether or not *Tron: Legacy*'s story makes it a great movie, its sharp visuals in 2D or 3D, and pounding soundtrack courtesy of Daft Punk will keep it near the top of the demo disc pile for a long, long time. Add in an innovative Second Screen app that pulls up special features in sync with the movie on an iPad or computer, and you've got something to impress the relatives with over the long holiday break and beyond.

\$30

on Amazon

BUY NOW



You might also like...



Star Wars Blu-ray

These are the Blu-ray discs you've been waiting for — as long as you don't mind a bit more post-release editing, courtesy of George Lucas. Greedo shoots first, but these are still largely the sci-fi classics you remember, and both the video and audio have been carefully restored in HD.

\$87

on Amazon

BUY NOW

Roku 2 XD

Positioned just between the \$50 LT and \$100 XS, we think you'll find the \$80 XD is *just* right. It has the 1080p capability its cheaper streaming sibling lacks, while all you're missing from the highest-end model are wired Ethernet and USB hookups, plus a motion game controller.

\$79

on Amazon

BUY NOW





Samsung BD-D5700 Blu-ray player

Sure, it may be 2011, but not *everyone* owns a Blu-ray player. Or perhaps they need one in another room, or a new model with access to additional entertainment like Netflix streaming. Samsung's BD-D5700 also includes access to the Samsung App portal with a slew of internet content to play, plus compatibility with local media in AVI, MKV, WMV formats, among others. Unfortunately there's no Amazon Prime Instant Video streaming — at least not yet. With WiFi built-in and a (suddenly rare these days) optical audio out for your aging receiver, this should fit within most setups without a problem.

\$129

on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...

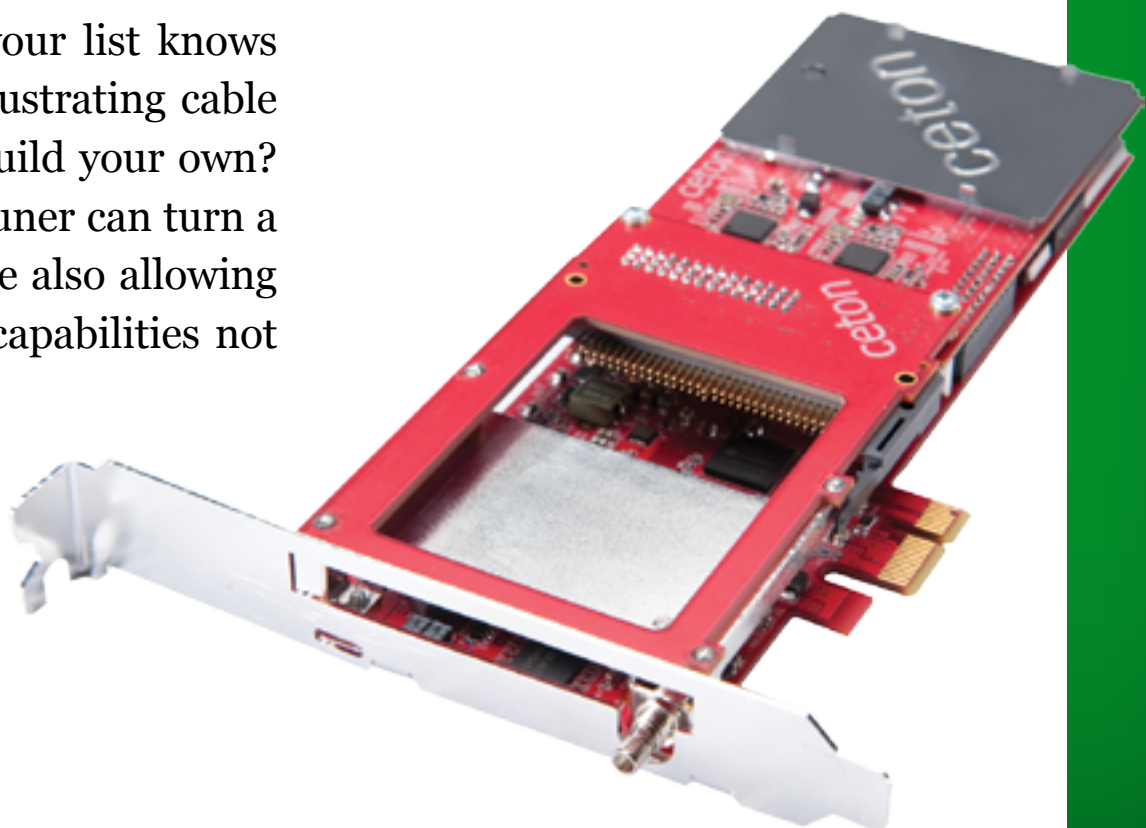
Ceton InfiniTV 4

The DIY-inclined TV lover on your list knows what's up — why put up with frustrating cable company DVRs when you can build your own? Ceton's InfiniTV 4 CableCARD tuner can turn a basic PC into a DVR easily, while also allowing for endless tweaking and extra capabilities not easily found on other platforms.

\$299

on Amazon

BUY NOW





TiVo Premiere Elite

If you'd prefer a ready-made model, the TiVo Premiere Elite lives up to its name by raising the bar with four tuners, a 2TB hard drive, the freshest software build available and 1GB of RAM. Of course, membership has its costs and this box will require a \$499 payment upfront, plus \$20 a month for service.

\$499 on Amazon

BUY NOW

Money's no object

Sharp LC-80LE632U

This one probably won't fit under the tree — in fact, you may need to knock out a wall, but it's worth the effort. Sharp's bigger-is-better mantra has taken its LCDs all the way up to 80-inches, which is probably enough to outpace the guy down the block no matter what street you live on. It'll take a few bucks to arrange a delivery, but at double the screen size of a 55-inch model, it's money well spent. There's no 3D or super-high refresh rate chicanery here, just a big, edge-LED-lit LCD HDTV. The biggest problem you might have is clearing out ten feet or more in front of this monster to watch it properly — if you can call that a problem.



\$4,400 on Amazon

BUY NOW

You might also like...

Optoma HD33

Optoma has a long history of bringing home nicely spec'd projectors at surprisingly low prices, and its latest effort is the HD33. It sports 1,800 lumens of brightness, new image processing and is the least expensive model you'll find that can blast out 1080p 3D. Get ready for some of the most epic sports, gaming, and movie experiences available this side of the cinema.



\$1,458 on Amazon

BUY NOW

Panasonic TC-P65VT30

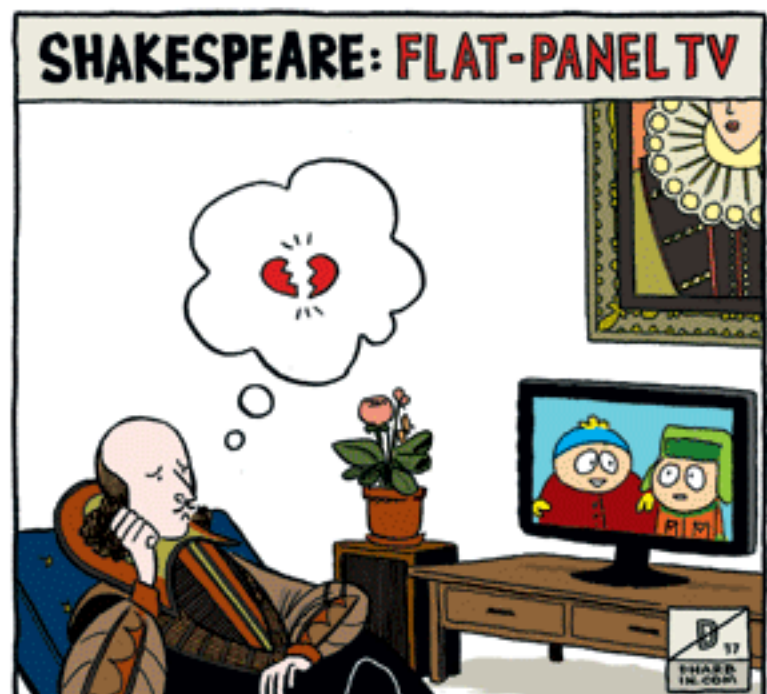
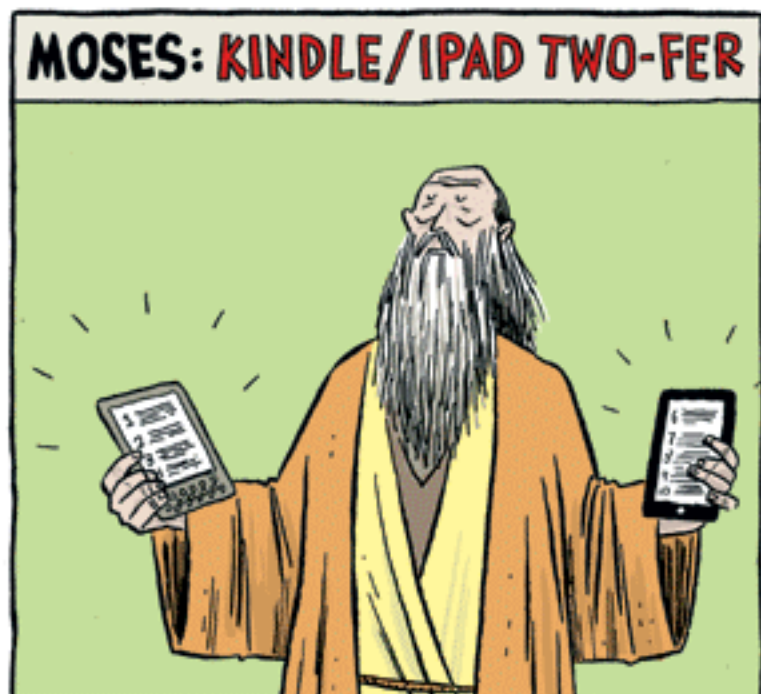
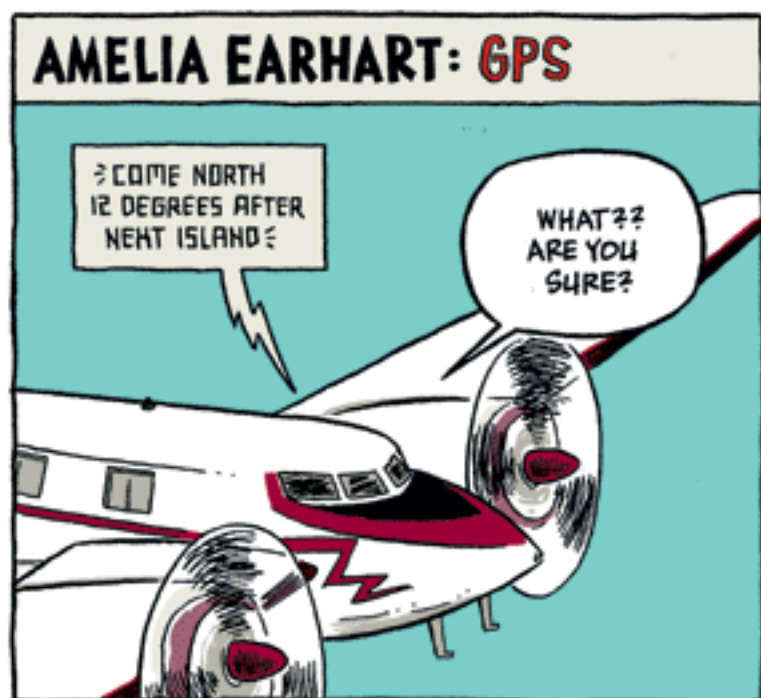
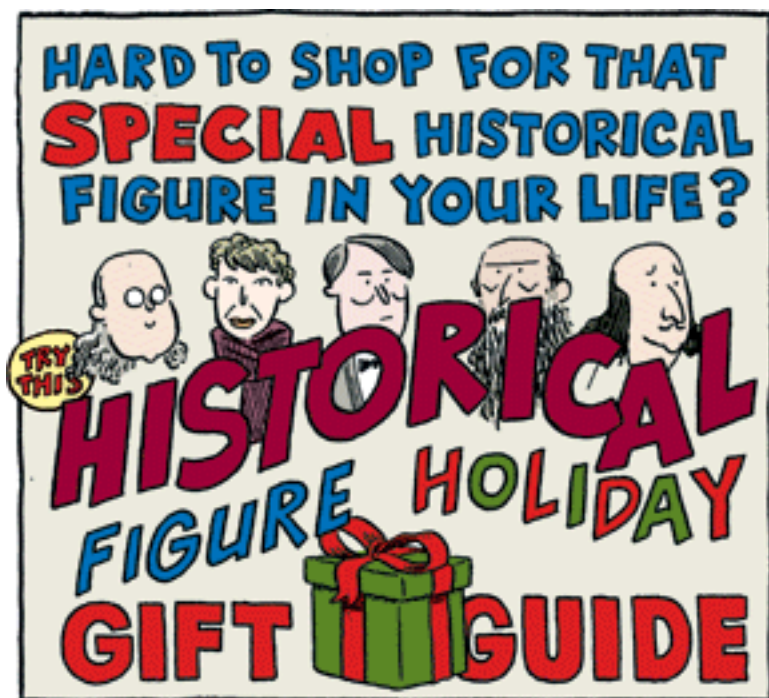
Panasonic's premiere plasma HDTV line just keeps getting better, with improved picture quality in 2D and 3D modes, plus an adjustment for the rising blacks that plagued earlier editions. The VT30 also includes Panasonic's new Viera Cast suite of internet apps for those so inclined, but buyers are probably more impressed by a picture that continues to close in on the mighty Kuro, and at a much friendlier price.



\$2,999 on Amazon

BUY NOW

end.



the last word - Dustin Harbin

engadget

Need real-time gadget and technology news? Download the official Engadget iPad app!

download engadget for iPad

The screenshot displays the Engadget iPad app interface. At the top, there's a search bar labeled "Search Engadget". Below it, a horizontal scroll bar shows various iPhone models (iPhone 2G, iPhone 3G, iPhone 3GS, iPhone 4, iPhone 5) with their respective prices and specifications. The main content area features a list of articles:

- 1 HOUR AGO**: IRL: Sony NEX-C3, Garmin Forerunner 110 and the Elgato Turbo.264 HD
- 3 HOURS AGO**: iPhone 5 to have 21Mbps HSPA+ data? China Unicom says so
- 37 MINS AGO**: **Dell confirms XPS 14z will go on sale in the US in the 'coming weeks'**
Remember that XPS 14z Dell teased at IFA? Yeah, well, it's arriving soon. As in, "the coming weeks" soon. The company just confirmed it's on the cusp of shipping here in the states, and while the outfit stopped short of giving a starting price, it's good and ready to talk specs. As we reported last month, it has the same industri...
By Dana Wollman September 29, 2011 12:35PM
- 59 MINS AGO**: **iPhone 5 cases and realistic unibody dummy show off incredible slimness**
While we're only five days away from finding out the true appearance of the next-generation iPhone, our good friends over at BENM.AT went ahead and crafted their very own unibody dummy using CAD drawings, CNC tools and a block of aluminum -- seriously, that's how they roll! Granted, this work's only based on...
By Richard Lai September 29, 2011 12:13PM
- 1 HOUR AGO**: **Kobo's Vox Android tablet appears online briefly, gets Canadian release date and pricing**
A day after another little-known e-reader manufacturer announced a tablet, a new Android slate from Kobo made a brief online appearance on Future Shop's site, only to be quickly taken down. According to the Canadian retailer, the FCC-approved tablet will offer up a 7-inch display with a 1024 x 600 resolution, WiF...
By Brian Heater September 29, 2011 11:53AM
- 1 HOUR AGO**: **Iceland gets a data center to call its own, still believes in fairies**
You say Iceland, we immediately think Eyjafjallajökull -- and no, we haven't had a narcoleptic collapse upon these very keys. It's been over a year since that volcano swept the headlines and interrupted air travel, providing outsiders with a skewed

Below the article list, there's a "NOW PLAYING:" section for "Engadget Podcast 246 - 07.01.2011" with a play button and a progress bar. At the bottom, there's a navigation bar with the Engadget logo and links to Home, Photos, Videos, Saved, Topics, Archives, Settings, and Podcasts. A small "257" is also visible in the center of the bottom bar.



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